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## **VBA Construction Management delivers five-phase renovation for Mitsubishi Electric Research Laboratories**

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Cambridge, MA VBA Construction Management (VBA) has completed a five-phase, 30,000 s/f renovation for Mitsubishi Electric Research Laboratories (MERL) at 201 Broadway. The project, led by VBA senior project manager Paulo Ramalhinho, transformed one and half floors into a modern, flexible workspace designed to support both advanced research and collaborative work.

The construction was carefully phased over five months to allow MERL employees to remain on site throughout the entire project. Each phase brought significant upgrades, including new flooring, ceilings, and lighting, as well as complete modernization of labs, conference rooms, and shared spaces. Nine specialized laboratories were also rebuilt to meet MERL's evolving research needs.

"It had been a decade since our last renovation, and employee needs had changed," said Anthony

Vetro, president and CEO of MERL. “Hybrid work means more demand for huddle rooms, and collaborative areas. VBA helped us create a space that is not only more functional but also welcoming and inspiring for our team.”

Key project features included:

- New millwork and finishes: Modern layouts and upgraded finishes across both floors.
- Custom systems integration: Advanced electrical, HVAC, fire protection, and plumbing systems to support cutting-edge research.
- Furniture coordination: Careful move management to minimize downtime, with new height-adjustable desks and upgraded furnishings.
- Glazing and drywall work: Custom glass installations that maximize natural light flow.
- Shared spaces: A fully redesigned cafeteria and reception area, both praised for their welcoming design and atmosphere.

The project team navigated complex logistical challenges, including phasing construction around active workspaces and coordinating a complete fire alarm system upgrade. “This was one of the most complex projects I’ve worked on,” said Paulo Ramalhinho, VBA Senior Project Manager. “We were moving people out of spaces, rebuilding them completely, and then moving teams back in – all while keeping the rest of the office operational. It took constant coordination between our team, the architects, engineers, inspectors, and MERL staff to make it happen successfully.”

MERL employees have responded positively to the finished space. “People love the new furniture and modern look,” added Vetro. “The cafeteria has quickly become a great gathering place for our employees, and the new lobby creates a strong first impression for visitors.”

The successful delivery of the project reinforces the strong working relationship between MERL and VBA. “We’ve partnered with VBA before, and their professionalism, communication, and dedication to quality are outstanding,” said Vetro. “They’ve built us a space that will serve us well over the coming years.”

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